EMERGENCY...SPECIAL BULLETIN

EARTHB

This special Epic Center in-depth report looks at an invasion of epic proportions. The scenes from Nintendo's new EarthBound depicted in the following pages may shock you, stun you, and leave you wriggling and gasping like a beached trout. We suggest psychiatric guidance for readers who continue beyond this point.

WHEN DREAMS LEAD TO MADNESS, WHO WILL WAKE YOU FOR BREAKFAST?

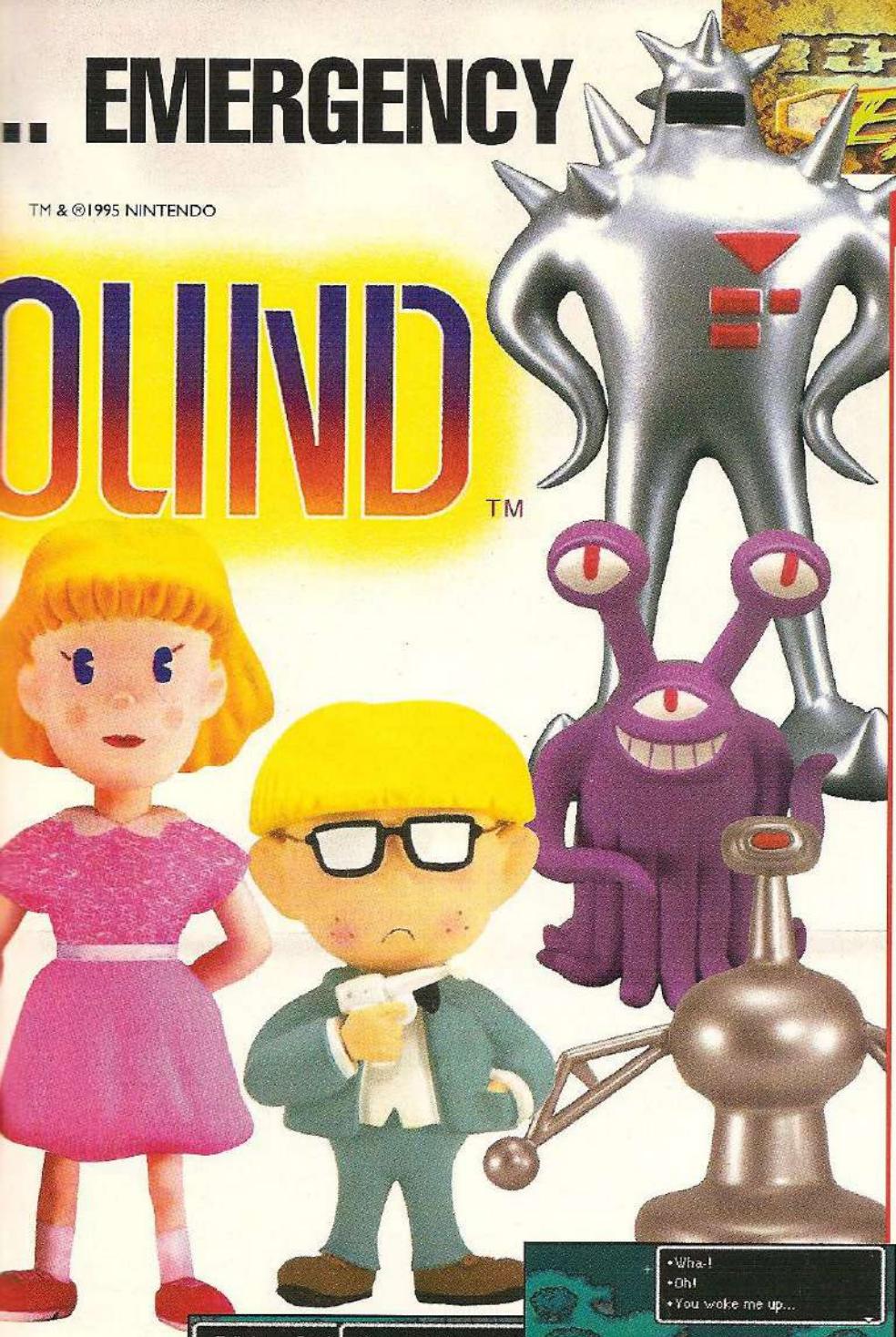
What can be said about EarthBound? In simple terms, it is a 24 megabit RPG housed in plastic with battery backed-up memory, three slots for separate game files and about 40 hours worth of mind-bending play. We use the term "play" in the loosest sense, for there is nothing innocent about this game in spite of its charming appearance.

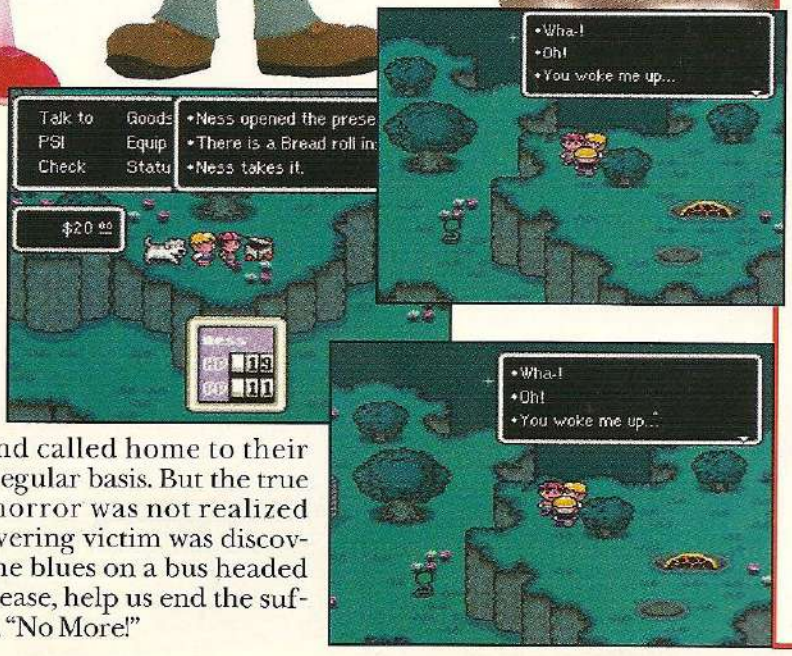
When the first players tentatively popped this "game" into their Super NES consoles, they were instantly infected by what has come to be known as the EarthBound Phenomenon. Mentally transformed into video game heroes, they actually believed that they were battling the alien force called Giygas. Those victims lucky enough to be unplugged went through weeks of denial during which they often attempted to use their fictional PSI powers and ray guns from the game world. Many reported flash-

... EMERGENCY

TM & ©1995 NINTENDO

OUND™





backs in which they scavenged through garbage cans, rode atop sea serpents, battled post-modern art and called home to their mothers on a regular basis. But the true scope of the horror was not realized until one recovering victim was discovered singing the blues on a bus headed out of town. Please, help us end the suffering. Just say, "No More!"

EPIC EXTRA

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

THE MAN BEHIND THE METEORITE

SHIGESATO ITOI

PROFILE
- •Age.....37
- •Home.....Tokyo
- •Profession.....Writer, TV personality, game designer
- •Favorite Food Strawberry, Tofu, Glove Fish

In an exclusive, trans-Pacific interview, Epic Center gets the scoop from Shigesato Itoi, the author of EarthBound.

You may not have heard the name Shigesato Itoi (pronounced E-Toy) before, but his face is familiar to millions of Japanese TV viewers and his articles have been published in Japan's major magazines. His many talents have also taken him down more unusual paths such as the creation of EarthBound.

Itoi began his career as an advertising copy writer for Seibu, a major department store in Japan. His television ads won numerous awards, drawing the attention of the public and giving him new opportunities. One of the most famous of his ads starred Woody Allen in a non-speaking role. His more recent television credits include several series of hour-long shows covering popular or quirky topics. Itoi develops the

concepts of the show then acts as the host. He has covered sports, explored ancient mines and, most recently, gone fishing in famous fishing holes around the world.

HOW EARTHBOUND WILL DESTROY CIVILIZATION AS WE KNOW IT

ONETT & TWOSON
plus Happy Happy Village

Onett—average, suburban town or root of all evil?

Onett seems like an average American community. But no. In Onett, dogs run off their leashes, crows attack children and policemen are rude. It is here where the glowing meteorite lands and the infection of Giygas first spreads. Some players, even after undergoing reverse brainwashing, demand that Onett be wiped off the face of the earth as the source of all evil, not to mention an awful odor that smells like old athletic socks.

Exhibit 1—The meteorite in Onett resembles nothing so much as a giant, alien pizza! Experts agree that the dark areas represent burnt pepperoni while the red regions are, undeniably, tomato sauce.

Exhibit 2—What better indictment of the game than this telling shot of Ness, the hero (and role model, mind you) reaching into a garbage can, discovering a burger, and eating it? Note the lack of any reference to napkins.

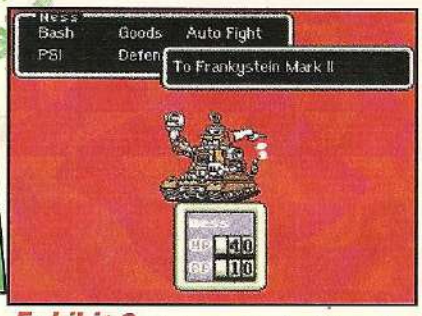
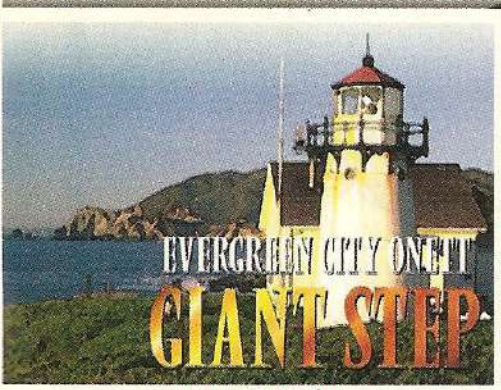


Exhibit 3—Not only does EarthBound advocate the violent overthrow, humiliation and ultimate taming of infected victims, it does so without apology or compassion. When will the taming end?

Exhibit 4—Players of EarthBound are forced to use horrific telekinetic powers. In this scene, Ness crushes his opponent with the comparative destructive force to an ant with a ten ton boot dropped on its head.



Dear Mom & Dad:
Having lots of fun. Visited Giant Step and squashed an enormous ant. Keep sending money. Love, Ness

Exhibit 5—Lawless behavior is seen everywhere in EarthBound. The pictured park in Twoson has been taken over by brazen merchants.

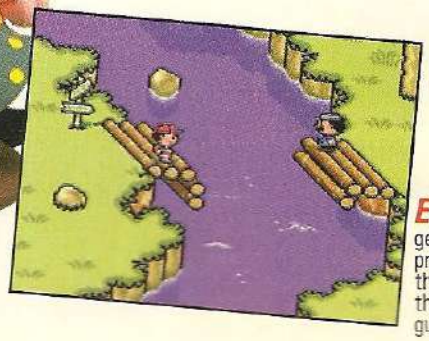
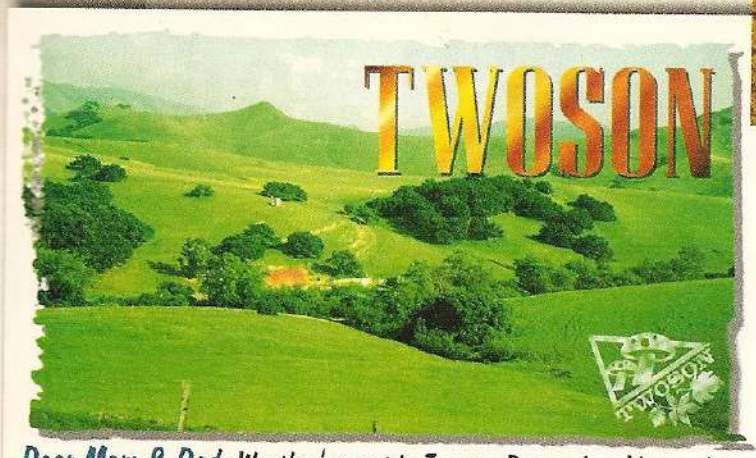


Exhibit 6—Danger and a general disregard for safety precautions can be observed throughout the game. Note the gratuitous lack of guardrails.

From NESS



Dear Mom & Dad: Weather's great in Twoson. Deposed ruthless cult leader and rescued a girl in a dress. Think I'm in love. Ness
P.S. She wore the dress.

Twoson —no where near Arizona.

The player's experiences in and around the town of Twoson underscore the dire peril that awaits careless gamers who wander into EarthBound. The ominous metaphor of Mr. Carpainter and his mindless cult followers can be seen as a warning to players. It is painfully clear EarthBound itself seeks to overthrow your mind, dress you up in a purple robe and send you outside to paint a cow blue. Be strong! Resist!

Exhibit 7—The Octo Eraser presumably destroys an octopus-shaped barrier. But is there a subliminal message here? Experts believe that players may develop allergies to many mollusk species after extended game play.

Exhibit 8—Ness is caught perpetuating video game stereotypes time after time. In this case, Paula, as a self-empowered woman, would surely prefer to rot in prison rather than to be rescued by a chauvinistic runt like Ness.

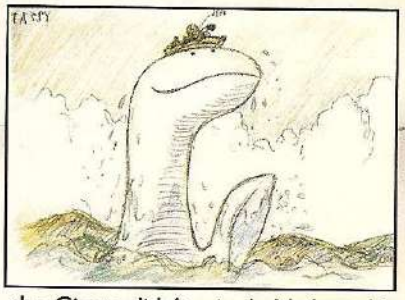
Exhibit 9—Reports from EarthBound recovery centers indicate that the fierce attacks of this mutant mole have scarred patients so deeply that many refuse to cross stretches of dirt without the protection of an M1 battle tank.

Exhibit 10—The single-color cult fixation represented by Mr. Carpainter's addiction to blue could set a dangerous example for impressionable players. Imagine the horror of a world run by a mad EarthBound veteran who loves pea green.

Exhibit 11—Many players report a sense of loss when they are unplugged. "My best friends were all in there," says one recovering Bounder. "I left my dog behind," says another. Save yourself the pain. Don't play this game!

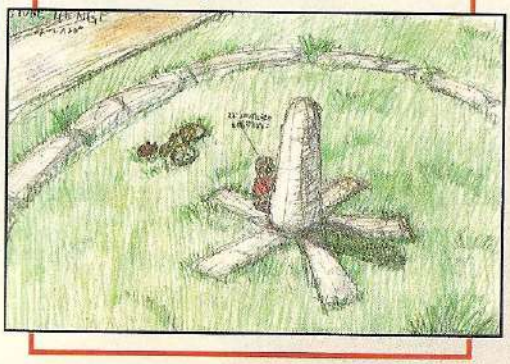
SHIGESATO ITOI, cont.

Mr. Itoi might be said to be the Japanese equivalent of columnist Dave Barry. Itoi's column in a popular Japanese magazine takes a light-hearted look at issues and events around the world. But his most lasting fame comes from his work in television. Several years ago, Itoi hosted a popular sports news series. As a devoted fan of the Tokyo Giants baseball team, he vowed to shave his head if the team failed to win the Nihon (Japanese) Series. Well, they didn't and he shaved his pate on national TV. Next year, challenging the fates once more, Itoi boldly announced that if



the Giants didn't win, he'd shave his head again. Luckily, they came through.

Perhaps the quirkiest of his TV series was his exploration of Mt. Akagi, the site of a 500 year old gold mine. With cameras and a national audience in tow, Itoi explored the mines that burrowed into the flanks of this mountain in search of the legendary mother-lode. He never found the treasure, but the effort has been commemorated in EarthBound with the gold mine in Dusty Dunes Desert.



FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE TOXIC EFFECTS OF EARTHBOUND

WINTERS, THREED and DUSTY DUNES

Science-fiction and fact mangled for gratuitous fun

The quirky uses to which science and technology are put in EarthBound may seem innocent, but the fact remains that such undiluted silliness causes chronic hiccups in laboratory rats, or at least should. Dr. Andonuts is portrayed as a clown of science, while the race of Mr. Saturns bears no resemblance to any researcher currently alive and standing in this room. But more damaging by far are the notions that players get from the game. More than 22% of players now believe in UFOs, 37% believe in time travel, and a whopping 86% believe that pizza can be delivered anywhere in the world within 30 seconds. Such beliefs threaten to shake the very foundations of our modern world.

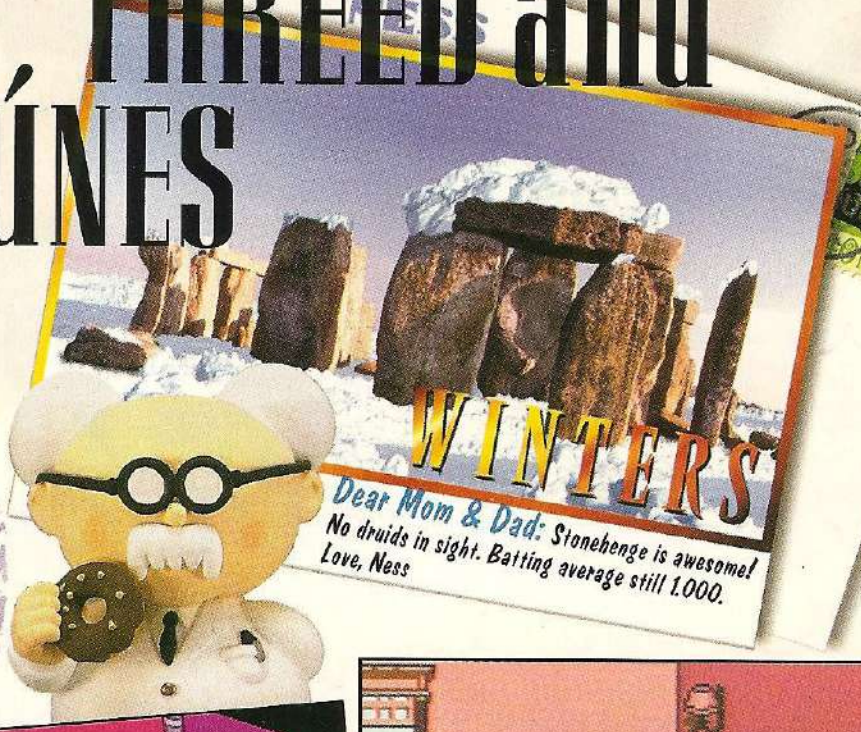


Exhibit 12—A shocking disregard for privacy is exhibited by players as they explore. "You gotta go in," says one player. And what do they do in these rooms? "You take stuff that you find, and sometimes you get beat up."

Exhibit 11—What you see here is the death of freedom. One sheet of Zombie Paper has incapacitated an entire population of urban living dead. The zombies have no defense, no chance, no hope.

Exhibit 13—Truancy. Witness the act of one Jeff Andonuts who breaks curfew and steals off into the night. On closer examination, it can be seen that Jeff has neither a proper winter coat nor mittens!

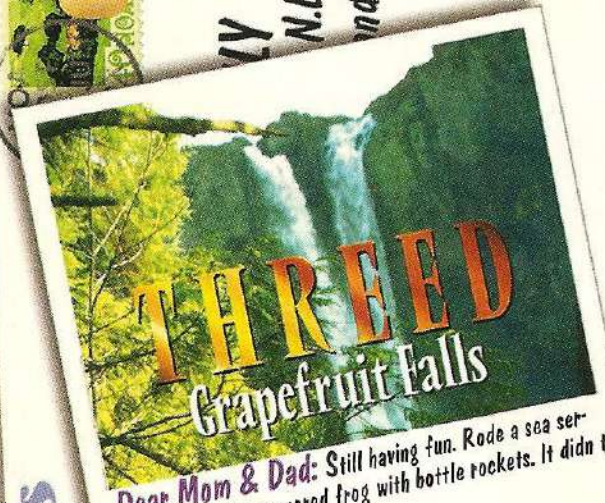

THREED
Grapefruit Falls
Dear Mom & Dad: Still having fun. Rode a sea serpent. Plugged an armored frog with bottle rockets. It didn't croak. Love, Ness

Exhibit 14—For decades the responsible scientific community has worked to dispel such ridiculous myths as the existence of huge, creatures with long necks that live in northern lakes. Alas, that effort has gone to waste.

EPIC EXTRA

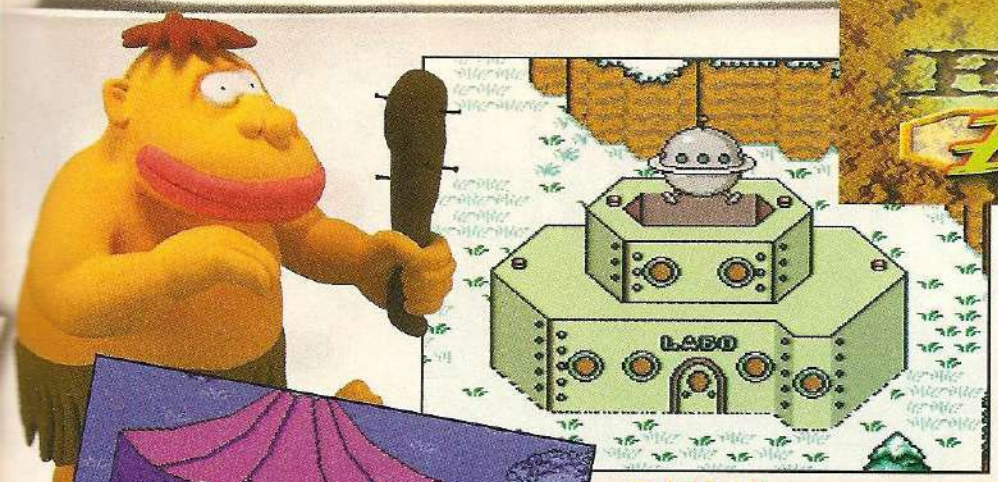


Exhibit 15—EarthBound players not only report seeing UFOs, they also claim to have ridden in them! Air Force spokespersons suggest that these deluded people have probably just been abducted by weather balloons.

Exhibit 16—The evil circus tent marks the grave of innocent fun. Thanks to EarthBound, every elephant, every acrobat and every man wearing a sequined jacket will be suspected of evil doings.

Exhibit 17—Fly Honey, a compound unknown to the EPA, is shown here being fed to Master Belch. Could this toxic substance seep into the soil, poison rivers and melt the ice caps, causing world-wide flooding?

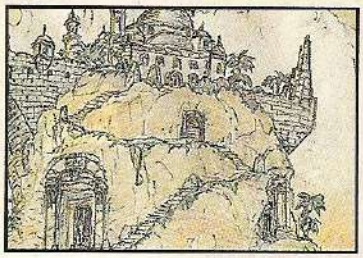
Exhibit 18—This venerable Sprout has been alive since the days of the mastodon, but demented EarthBounders roast it with their PSI Fire. Fortunately, there are condiments in the game to cover the appalling lack of taste.

Exhibit 19—The carelessness of a myopic individual is no excuse for defacing the desert with this sign. Unrestricted signage is one of the great plagues of the Twentieth century. Help clean up EagleLand.

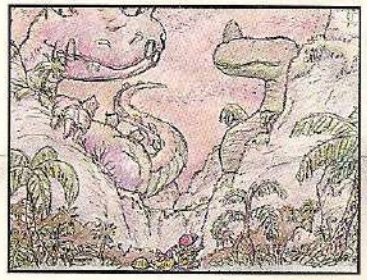
Dusty Dunes Dese
Dear Mom & Dad: Sat on a talking sesame seed. What a surprise! Running low on money. Need a million bucks. Love you,
Ness

SHIGESATO ITOI, cont.

So how does a famous TV host and writer become a video game author? According to Mr. Itoi, it all began ten

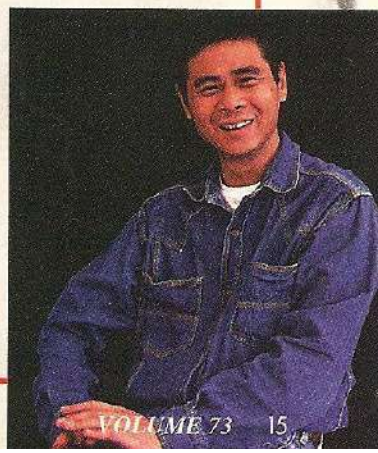


years ago when he fell in love with Super Mario Bros. He loved playing the game, even though he admits that he's not very good at it. He thinks the characters and challenges of SMB are great, and he loves Shigeru Miyamoto's creations, but he prefers



to play RPGs. Why? "An RPG is the only kind of game you can put down when you want to get something to eat or go to the bathroom," he joked through a translator. "You can even drop it for months, then come back to the game and keep going."

Mr. Itoi became involved in the EarthBound project when he visited Nintendo headquarters in Kyoto several years ago. He met with Mr. Miyamoto and expressed his interest in creating a different kind of RPG, one that doesn't rely on fantasy elements or science fiction. "I wanted to create a game with real characters—characters whom players would recognize in the people around them."



EARTHBOUND THREATENS FAMILY UNIT

FOURSIDE, SUMMERS and DALAAM

The promise of exotic, foreign locations seduces unsuspecting players.

EarthBound holds out the promise of excitement, travel and adventure, but at what terrible cost to the player? Many lose interest in the real world, stopping play only long enough to eat dinner and bathe the dog. Families become divided, husbands and wives fight over game time, children hog the Player's Guide. It's easy to condemn these Bounders as crazed, psychotic epic junkies, but is that really the case? Research has shown that players without any RPG experience are just as likely to succumb to the forbidden pleasures of EarthBound as seasoned veterans.

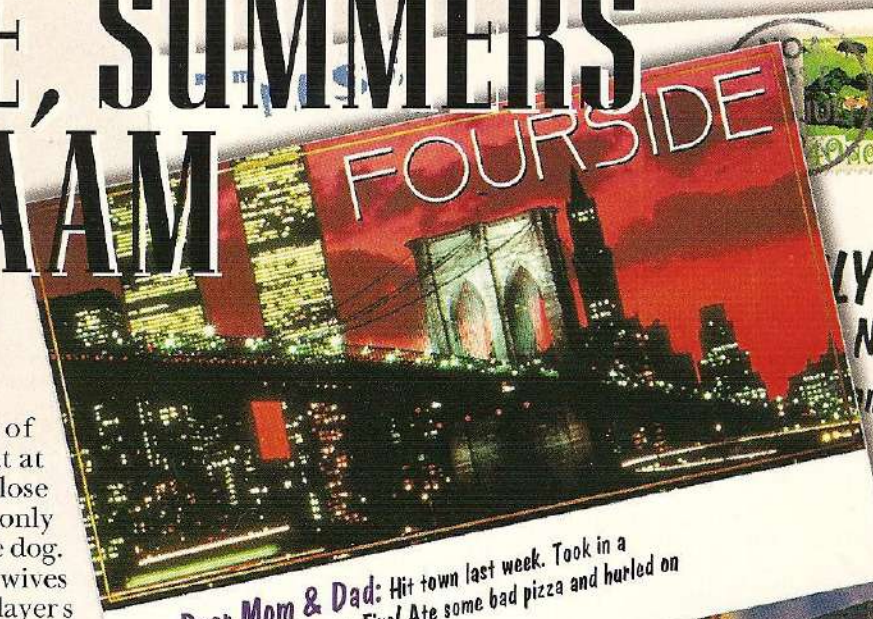

FOURSIDE
Dear Mom & Dad: Hit town last week. Took in a show—the Runaway Five! Ate some bad pizza and hurled on bus. How's Fido? Love, Ness

Exhibit 19—Mole skins command a high price, but the indiscriminate slaughter of giant moles must cease. Players delude themselves that it's all a game, but it's no game to those shivering, naked moles.

Exhibit 20—Most governments have condemned open-pit mining as environmentally indefensible, but EarthBound laughs in the face of sound mining practices. Furthermore, all safety precautions are blatantly ignored.

Exhibit 22—The wanton destruction of the Mani Mani Statue in Moonside is just another example of the madness that reigns in EarthBound. Do civilized people destroy a work of art just because it is a focus of evil?

Exhibit 21—Rudeness sinks to new depths in Moonside. Players report being warped from one area to another just when they were getting to like the place. Etiquette in Moonside is so bad that people say yes when they really mean no.

EPIC EXTRA

Exhibit 23—The use of bombs, bottle rockets and other explosive weapons can hardly be justified by the excuse that they are used in self defense, because characters in EarthBound are never lost.

Exhibit 24—The seaside at Summers may look like a healthy place to play, but reports of sunburn, harassment, and bootleg gelato paint a darker picture. Like EarthBound itself, Summers conceals dark secrets.

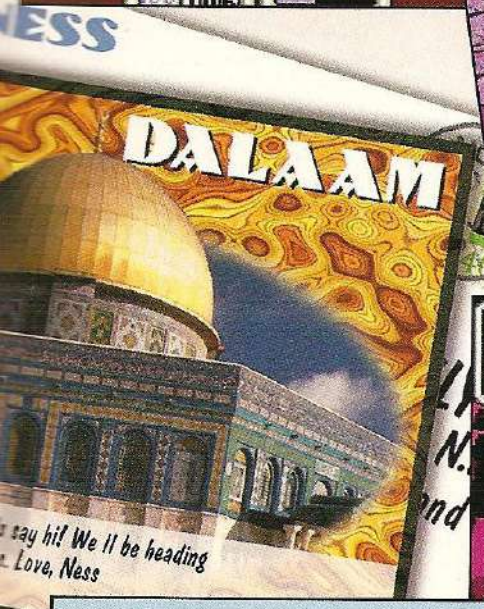


Exhibit 25—EarthBound advocates playing with your food, breaking one of the most ancient taboos known to man. Here we see Ness, Paula and Jeff cruelly toying with a giant mushroom before slinging it in the frying pan.

Exhibit 26—Only Prince Poo is on a higher spiritual plain in EarthBound, but even his lofty soul will be dropped in the muck by the unspeakable events that take place in EarthBound.

Exhibit 27—The Plague Rat of Doom is just one of many instances in which EarthBound glorifies disgusting vermin. Rats, bats, bugs and slugs all slither and scurry throughout this depraved game.

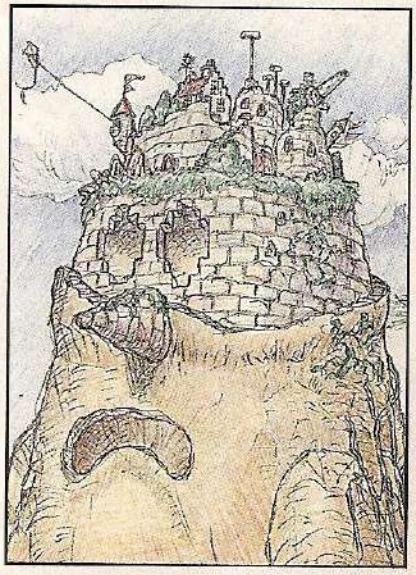
Exhibit 28—The Krakken, a mythical sea serpent, displays callous disregard for human life in EarthBound. But the truth is that most mythical beasts are less of a danger to people than a slick bathroom floor.

SHIGESATO ITOI, cont.

After his meeting with Miyamoto, Mr. Itoi met with Mr. Yamauchi, president of Nintendo Company

Ltd., who gave his blessing to the "Mother" project. From there, Itoi teamed up with a company called Ape in Tokyo. Ape is best known for its books on video games, but their artistic talents perfectly matched Itoi's vision for Mother, as EarthBound was called in Japan. He knew from the start that he wanted to do something new and different. "I didn't want to create a game by the numbers," he told us. "Instead of putting the game in a fantasy setting, I wanted to use ordinary places."

The first game was developed for the 8-bit Nintendo Entertainment System, but that version never came out in the U.S. The current version of EarthBound for the Super NES retains many of the features of the NES original, including the sense of humor and artistic style.



EARTHBOUND MAY BE A HAZARD TO YOUR NOSE

SCARABA, DEEP DARKNESS and THE LOST UNDERWORLD

The end is nigh. Repent now!

The final leg of the journey in EarthBound leads players into such vile and loathsome circumstances that decorum prevents us from detailing them here. Let it be said simply that you will experience horrors like dinosaurs, aliens, time travel and photo albums. In the end, players face the ultimate indignity of losing their humanity when they are transformed into robots. What sort of game turns young heroes into mere mechanical droids? Where will it all end? Act now or one day soon you may wake up to discover that you have become a cellular phone.

Exhibit 30—The journey into the Scaraba desert without taking proper precautions, or at least an air conditioned Land Rover, may cause players to sweat like pigs and see frightening mirages following them.

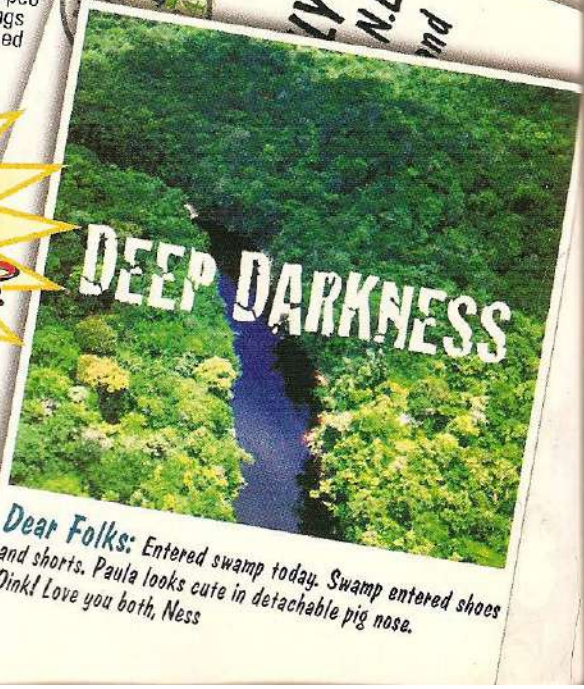
Exhibit 31—This pile of sludge may not be attractive, but surely it deserves better than to be torched by Poo. What this game needs is a PSI Friendship power so that monster and man may live in harmony.

Exhibit 32—Close observations of infected Bounders show that battle fatigue causes people to react violently toward common things such as squirrels, mini-vans or heavily armed space robots.

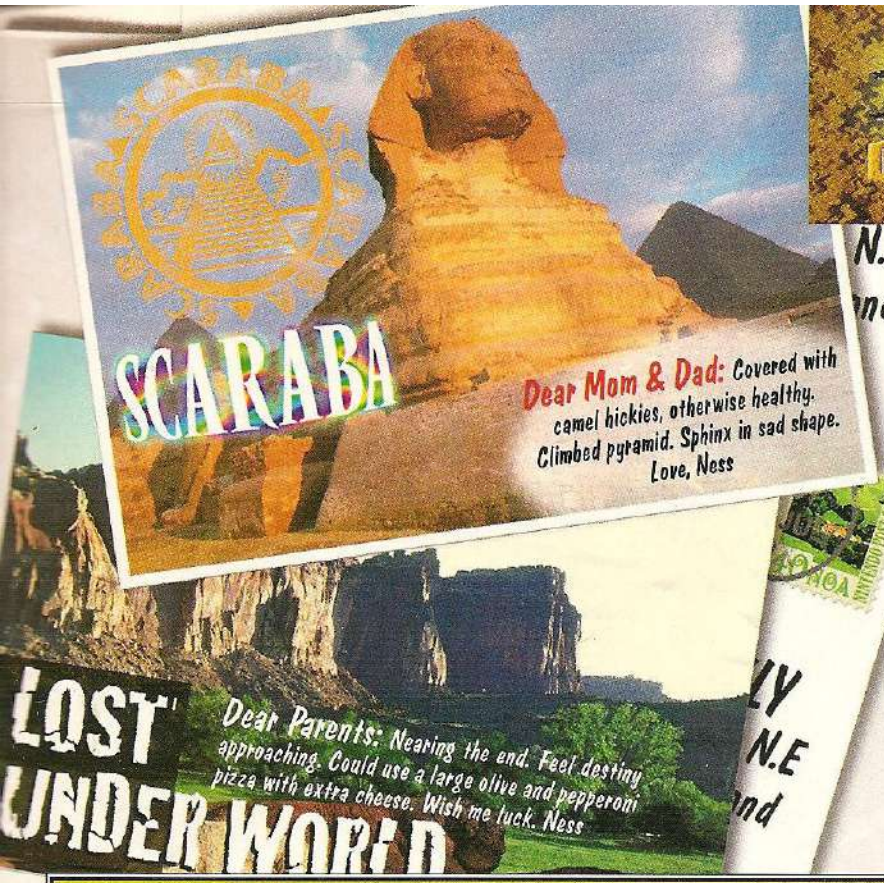
Exhibit 33—More shocking revelations! EarthBound character Jeff Andonuts blasts Electro Specter with illegally obtained bottle rockets, cheating the government out of vital tax revenues.

CAN YOU RESIST EARTHBOUND?

Reality is so twisted in EarthBound that these villagers believe that everything surrounding them is in a cage. Recovering players also exhibit signs of false perceptions—wearing their pants on their heads and so forth.

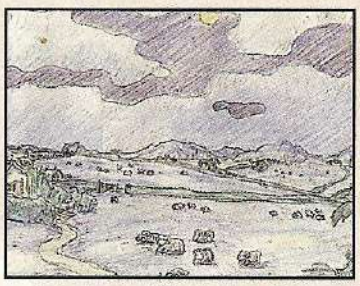

DEEP DARKNESS
From NESS
Dear Folks: Entered swamp today. Swamp entered shoes and shorts. Paula looks cute in detachable pig nose. Oink! Love you both, Ness

EPIC EXTRA


SCARABA
Dear Mom & Dad: Covered with camel hickies, otherwise healthy. Climbed pyramid. Sphinx in sad shape. Love, Ness
LOST UNDER WORLD
Dear Parents: Nearing the end. Feel destiny approaching. Could use a large olive and pepperoni pizza with extra cheese. Wish me luck. Ness

SHIGESATO ITOI, cont.

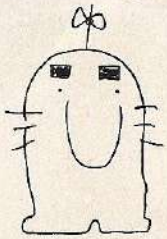
When Mr. Itoi was growing up in Japan, he used to watch American TV shows. "Everyone would get together



to watch shows like Lucy, Gunsmoke, Flipper, The Beverly Hillbillies and Twilight Zone. That was our picture of America—Father Knows Best and Leave It To Beaver. I love to think of America as a place like that." You can see fragments of that America everywhere in EarthBound, from the funny enemies to the manicured lawns. This game, conceived and programmed in Japan, is a tribute to the younger, gentler United States of the '50s.

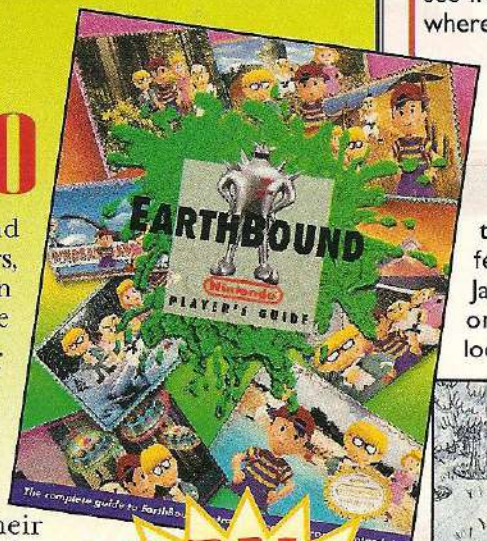
Mr. Itoi ended our conversation with a comment on the differences between the U.S. and Japan. "In Japan," he said, "everyone strives to be the same, to look the same, do the same things

and even think the same. What I like most about America is that everyone is an individual." This amazingly creative and individualistic Japanese man is already working on his next project—a video game, about fishing.



Shigesato Itoi

THIS BOOK STINKS, TOO



Not only does the game of EarthBound reek like some foul creature of the sewers, but Nintendo has made the product even more repulsive with the Player's Guide that comes packaged with the game. Inside the book, you'll find a page of scratch-and-sniff cards bursting with odors from the game. The concept of Smell marketing reaches a new low with this campaign. Your nose will be offended, your friends will keep you out of their homes and your dog will probably eat the book. Ask yourself, is it really worth it?

EARTHBOUND TAKES HUMAN TOLL

SAVE $15

Yes, it's true that the Player's Guide is an $11 value, filled with every map and strategy needed for players to complete the game. But its true purpose is to seduce players into the world of EarthBound. Once you've entered, you will be caught like a zombie on Zombie Paper. How many innocent players have been lost so far? The numbers rise daily. Save yourself while you can. It's, it's, it's coming soooooon!

Fast 3-D action. Very challenging, particularly at the 500cc level. Great fun as a two-player game, especially in Tag Mode.

Low frame rate makes for jerky animation in some areas. Barriers don't stop bikes from bouncing off the track and getting lost.

EARTHBOUND

Super NES

Company.....Nintendo
Release Date.....June 1995
Memory Size.....24 Megabits

EarthBound is a sci-fi RPG for the '90s.

EarthBound comes packaged complete with Ident-a-Smell scratch-and-sniff cards and a Nintendo Power Player's Guide to help you through the toughest standoffs. What you also get in EarthBound is forty or more hours of inventive RPG action with a party of up to four young teens who must save the world from an alien who has taken over much of the planet. Giygas, the alien, infects the minds of people and animals, whom you must then fight and tame. The story takes you from your home town of Onett to other towns and cities, a desert, a swamp, a lost world where dinosaurs still roam, and even inside your own mind. Along the way you'll meet a cult of fanatics, a friendly sea serpent, lots of monkeys, a race of shy folk and a tribe of nosey people. You'll also have to fight your way through many areas armed with baseball bats, frying pans and an assortment of ray guns. If you really put your mind to it, you can use telekinetic PSI powers. RPG gamers will be familiar with the Dragon Warrior battle mechanics, but EarthBound shines brightest in its inventive story, which was written by Shigesato Itoi, one of Japan's most popular writers. The graphics also add a lot to the game, as you'll see in our ten page explorative review.

A great story, fun graphics, good sound effects.

Frequent, sometimes tedious battles. Poorly designed inventory system limits how many items you can carry.

THE FLINTSTONES—THE MOVIE

Game Boy

Company.....Ocean
Release Date.....March 1995
Memory Size.....2 Megabits

Domestic dilemmas in the Stone Age keep Fred and Barney hopping and bopping.

Ocean's Game Boy version of The Flintstones, which is based on the live-action movie, presents the prehistoric town of Bedrock as a town filled with teddy bears and unidentifiable and unfriendly dinosaurs. Each side-scrolling stage pits either Fred or Barney against typical platform foes while they collect objects for points. Don't expect much in the way of story—Fred must make his way home after a hard day at the quarry or Barney must find Bam-Bam. Long stages wind up with a battle against a big boss. Between action stages, you'll get a chance to win bonus points in simple puzzle games like Bam-Bam's Cracks 'N' Crosses, which is really Tic-Tac-Toe. If you want a challenge, you probably won't want this game. But if you want a decent little action romp that won't strain your brain or thumb, you might take a look.

Good graphics. Simple play, but lots of it, for younger gamers. Select extra lives and continues.

Very slow action and limited play control.

JUNGLE STRIKE

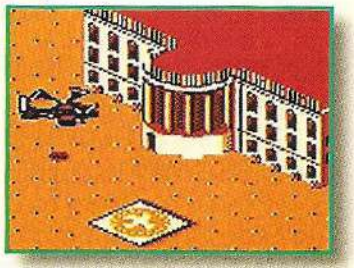
Game Boy

PASS WORD

Company.....Malibu
Release Date.....June 1995
Memory Size.....2 Megabits

Take the fight to the terrorists' home base in this classic combat game from Malibu.

EA's aerial helicopter combat game comes to Game Boy in this licensed version from Malibu. Unlike Desert Strike, which was reviewed earlier this year in Power, Jungle Strike doesn't make use of Super Game Boy enhancements. But when it comes to game play, Jungle Strike is a clear winner over the earlier game. The plot begins with a terrorist incursion in Washington, D.C. Your job as the army's top gun Apache pilot is to track the terrorists and blow them away. You'll be armed with Hydra and Hellfire missiles plus guns. Play controls can be set for Momentum or No Momentum. As in Desert Strike, you must also choose a co-pilot. The skills of each of these helpers will affect your mission, since the earlier guys are clowns and the later co-pilots are gun-slinging, crane-cranking gods. In all, you'll have five campaigns plus separate objectives in each for a total of 34 missions. In two of the campaigns you can even find special vehicles—a motorcycle and hovercraft—to use while dodging enemy bullets. This month's Power review will take you into the fire zone.



Play control is good—a big improvment over Desert Strike.

Not as challenging as the Super NES Desert Strike game, but longer than the Game Boy Desert Strike game. No Super Game Boy enhancements.

STRATEGY

It's weird. It's quirky. It's hilarious. EarthBound could be one of the most unusual role-playing games you've ever played. This month's Epic Center examines this modern day RPG's many offbeat features and fun points.

EARTHBOUND

An evil alien has invaded Eagleland, bent on the destruction of all of humanity. You're going to have to save the world, but you're just a kid. Kids have limitations, right? Go home. What? You're a special kid? Well, you'd better read on and remember these hot tips then!

PHONE HOME!

Who ever heard of a game that requires you to call home? EarthBound blends in a unique touch of real life by placing phones randomly in every corner of the planet. These phones provide players with a variety of options, including calling Dad, Mom, Escargo Express or Mach Pizza. Call Dad to save your progress in the game. It's a good idea to phone him as soon as you arrive in a new area, after defeating a major enemy, or just before you embark on an adventure into a new region. Check in with Mom to remedy homesickness. Homesickness occurs when your hero doesn't stay in touch with the familiar sounds of home. When extremely homesick, your hero can become distracted and unwilling to fight in battle. Call Escargo Express if your bags are full of extra junk. Your sister has a part-time job there and she is always willing to take a load off your hands. When you're hungry, call Mach Pizza for a delivery. Just like in real life, these pizza chefs take their time, and you won't get a discount for a tardy delivery. It's a good idea to make an order prior to leaving on a dangerous mission. The delayed delivery can make up lost hit points, but make sure you have room for the food in your inventory! Check out your surroundings and note the location of the closest phone. Maybe the next EarthBound game will include pagers!

While black phones cost nothing to use, pay phones require one dollar. Too bad you can't call collect!

If the is load too heavy to bear, call your Sister at Escargo Express!

Call Dad to save the game or check on your bank account. Check in with Mom, too!

Plan ahead and call Mach Pizza for a meal to go.

HAVE CASH, WILL TRAVEL

ATM! ATM! Who's this ATM? Not who but what, it's just the most important feature in the game! Automated Teller Machines provide you with access to your cash.

It's a good idea to visit an ATM just before journeying out of town.

ATMs are found in Department Stores, Hotels, and Drugstores. As you defeat enemies, your Dad deposits your winnings into your account. He informs you of these transactions when you call him. Keep track of your account balance and save your cash to buy those gnarly items you've been dreaming about.

E. R.

Caught a cold? Did the desert heat give you sunstroke? Feeling strange after a weird battle? Maybe there's a mushroom growing on top of your head? Find the cure at your local hospital! A Doctor can cure a variety of ailments and a Nurse can revive an unconscious party member. The Healer rectifies conditions that neither the Doctor nor the Nurse can do anything about. All of these cures are available for a price. If you want to avoid the rising costs of health care, add Refreshing and Secret Herbs, or a Horn of Life to your inventory.

Note the location of the hospital in every town you visit. The extra effort can save the lives of party members.

Hospitals are busy places. Pick up clues from the patients.

Doctors and Nurses all look the same, but finding the Healer might be a little tricky.

Keep life saving items in your inventory and avoid high medical costs.

EPIC STRATEGY

STUCK, BUT NOT OUT OF LUCK

Down and out without a clue? Buy yourself some helpful ideas at the local hint stand! The guy running the stand is tapped in to the information highway. Make a purchase

Buying a hint can save time and avoid frustration.

before you're roadkill. If you can't afford the price of a hint, take out some enemies and visit the local ATM. The hint stand contains pricless information to get you back in your game!

SWIRLING COLORS

Who gets the first swing in battle? What about a surprise attack? Do you have to fight in every battle, especially against weak enemies? Watch the swirling colors when you encounter an enemy and enter a combat sequence. Touching an enemy head on, or face to face, results in a black swirl and even odds in combat. Sneaking up behind an enemy produces a green swirl and the first swing in battle. Watch out for a red swirl! The color red signifies that the enemy sneaked up behind you and they have the first attack. EarthBound's combat system measures the strength of your party versus an opponent. As you raise your levels, you will find that some easy enemies flee as you approach. If you attack these weak targets one on one, you'll automatically win without going though the battle sequence! Pick on weaker enemies later in the game to build up character levels.

Don't see red! Look for a mean green scene in all your combat encounters!

Single out a lone, weak enemy to automatically win without entering the battle sequence.

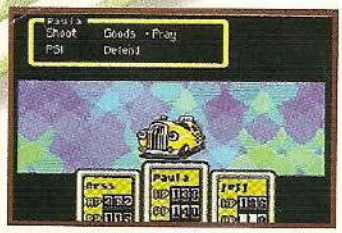
SPICE OF LIFE

Many role-playing games introduce different foods for characters to eat and restore hit points. Usually there are no more than five or six different meals in an average game. EarthBound has a smorgasbord of forty-five different foods to sample! Experiment and combine your food with inexpensive condiments. Condiments can increase or decrease the number of hit points a food item restores. Most combinations make sense. You might want Ketchup with your Bag of Fries, but you certainly wouldn't put Hot Sauce on a Popsicle, right? A Jar of Delisauce goes with every food, but the $300 price tag might break your budget. Food and condiment revitalization effects are the same with all characters EXCEPT the Prince. The Prince's special diet nullifies many of the nutrients available in EarthBound's foods.

The best (and most expensive) food is the Brain Food Lunch.

PRAY COMMAND

The girl character has a unique battle command called the Pray Command. This option produces a variety of mysterious



Because of its random and sometimes harmful results, most players elect to use the Pray command only in desperate situations.

effects that can help or hinder the party in combat. Because of the random and sometimes harmful results of the Pray option, many experienced players elect to use this command only in desperate or hopeless combat situations. The following quick summaries describe the random effects from the Pray command.

The Pray command won't give you exactly what you want.

Warm Light

The hit points of the characters in the party are increased slightly. Warm and Very Subtle Light occur the most frequently out of all the Prayer command results.

Very Subtle Light

This light increases the hit points of all parties in combat. This prayer has twice the healing power of the Warm Light effect.

Dazzling Light

This prayer result is identical to a PK Flash spell. All parties in combat risk the chance of being blinded by a burst of illumination. Affected characters cannot stop crying and usually miss if they attack with a weapon.

Mysterious Light

The aura from this glow increases all of the PSI points of characters in your party. Remember that the Pray command does not cost any PSI points to use—a primary reason most players use this command when they have no other options.

Golden Light

The Golden Light randomly maxes out the hit points of one member in the party. This is the only prayer result that can revive an unconscious character.

Sheet Lightning

Sheet Lightning is another blinding spell that reduces the amount of damage produced in combat. Like the Dazzling light, this prayer creates a PK Flash spell that affects both parties in combat. As in real life, Sheet Lightning is very infrequent—you may see this occurrence once in the entire game.

Rainbow Colored Light

Yeah! A second chance to do things right! The rainbow light brings all deceased party members back to life. Don't expect to see this effect very often—this is a rare form of divine intervention.

Mysterious Aroma

This has the same effect as watching a test pattern late at night. One whiff of the aroma puts all parties temporarily to sleep. Not a desirable or common occurrence.

Thunder

Yikes! Don't run under any nearby trees! Thunder exposes all parties in combat to the risk of Brain Shock. This seriously incapacitates any affected individuals.

Heavy Air

Heavy Air creates a fog bank that envelopes both parties in combat, dropping their defensive ratings. You can land more blows unless you've been hit by a PK Flash attack.

EarthBound is filled with unusual weapons and items. Use the pig nose to find the magic truffles.

WONDERFUL WEAPONS

Is there a weapon for the PSI-powered Prince? What is the best weapon for the Hero? Which enemies leave behind which weapons or items? Read on and discover how you can get the coolest and most powerful items in EarthBound.

Sword of Kings

The Sword of Kings is the ONLY weapon in the game available to the Prince. You can't obtain this weapon until the party explores all of Deep Darkness and enters the Stonehenge Base. Search the maze beneath Stonehenge and defeat the random Starman Supers until you receive the sword. Getting the weapon is tough—there is only one chance in 128 that a Starman Super has the Sword of Kings. One method for speeding up the process of finding the sword is to use the SPY command. If the SPY command reveals that the Starman Super has a present, you've found the Prince's best weapon for winning the game.

The Starman Super sometimes drops a Sword of Kings after being defeated.

Gutsy Bat

The Gutsy Bat is considered by most players to be the best weapon for the hero. While the Casey Bat has 25 more offensive points, the Gutsy Bat is much more accurate. The mighty Casey struck out with the Casey Bat, and you might too. Hit a home run with the Gutsy Bat! The Gutsy Bat is found beneath the Sea of Eden in the Lost Underworld. The weapon is obtained randomly by defeating a wandering Kraken. Like the Sword of Kings, you have one chance in 128 of finding the weapon after taming the sea serpent.

Magic Frying Pan

Mystical Omelettes! The Magic Frying Pan is one of the best weapons in the game for the Girl! Look for the wandering Chomposaurs on the plains of the Lost Underworld. You need to defeat these wild lizards and scour their remains. Can you guess the odds of finding a Magic Frying Pan on a Chomposaur? If you said one in 128, you win this additional tip: You can purchace the Holy Frying Pan at the Second Tenda village for a mere $3,480. What a deal!

Goddess Ribbon

The Goddess Ribbon is one of the best defensive items in the game. It can only be equipped by the Girl. Look for the Ghosts of Starman in Saturn Valley near the very end of the game. The odds of finding this item are the same as the Sword of Kings, Gutsy Bat and Magic Frying Pan.

Star Pendant

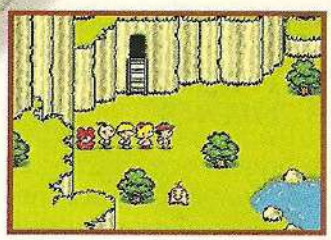
The pendant protects your party from the effects of Fire, Freeze, Flash and Paralysis. The Star Pendant can be used by all members in your party. Defeat random Major Psychic Psychos in Magican to get it. If you've read the preceding paragraphs, you already know the odds of the Major Psychic Psychos leaving the item behind.

If You're Happy And You Know It...Fresh Eggs!

Fresh Eggs are more than a meal—they're an uplifting experience. Carry an egg in your inventory long enough and it hatches into a chick. The sight of this cute chirping bird makes your hero happy. Fresh eggs can be used temporarily to remedy the effects of homesickness, but if you hang on to a chick too long, it grows up to be a normal chicken. Chickens cannot cure homesickness, but you can sell them back to the store for a tidy profit.

Target Teddy

What's the deal with these stupid Teddy Bears following you around? What if people see you with a stuffed animal and start laughing at you? Don't ditch the bear quite yet—it serves an important function. In the heat of battle, monsters sometimes confuse the bear for you and take a swing in Teddy's direction. When the bear takes a hit, it's one less round of damage for you! The Teddy Bear is a life saving target! Keep one in your inventory at all times! And if people laugh at you, keep your chin up.



Drag the Teddy into battle and use him as a decoy! Don't worry—he can bear the blows.

Hey Pig, Piggy...

The town of Scaraba sells Pig Noses for $300. Besides making you look really ugly, what are they for? Keep the Pig Nose in your inventory until you reach Deep Darkness. The dark, damp soil of Deep Darkness jungle is perfect for growing Magic Truffles, and the Pig Nose can smell them buried in the dirt. When used as an item, the Magic Truffle restores 80 PSI points. Not a bad deal for looking silly!

Make Like a Mouse...

...and get out of the house, or any other maze! The Exit Mouse looks like a regular rodent except for

a large sign protruding from his head. When used as an item, the Exit Mouse instantly takes the party back to the beginning of any labyrinth or dungeon. Use one if you're stuck in a maze or if your party's condition is grim. The Exit Mouse can be found in a maze for free, and you can transfer this item to other mazes. You cannot use the rodent as an item in battle.

Pudding Power

The Magic Pudding sold in Magicant is one of the best meals you can purchase! Use this gooey mush to replenish a character's PSI points. The mystical meal restores forty points each time it is used (even on the Prince). Buy up this prized pudding before you embark on the journey to conclude the game.

The Magic Pudding is a winning dessert in the final moments of EarthBound.

Hard Rock Candy

Save the Planet! Use Rock Candy in combat to raise your character's attributes! In order to pull off this nifty trick, your character needs to have both Rock Candy and a condiment in his or her personal inventory. Looking for the perfect food combination? Many players prefer the flavor of Cocoa with their candy. While in combat, select the Rock Candy as an item to Use. This item cannot damage your enemy. When the Rock Candy is used in battle, a condiment will be eaten and a random character attribute (Guts, IQ, Speed, Vitality or Luck) is increased! Talk about a sugar high!

Rock Candy works only in Combat when you have a condiment in your inventory.

PROBLEM AREAS

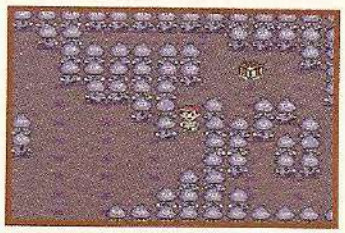
You know the funky features, the best items and even a few red hot tips. What else could a special kid like you need? How about some suggestions for getting around those common problem areas?

The Pencil Statue

Many players encounter the Pencil Statue blocking their path, but few get the point. Remember the two kid inventors in Twoson? Most citizens think the Orange Kid is the coolest thing since ice cream, but he's too hung up on the prospect of fortune and fame to invent anything. Give your money to the sloppy Apple Kid. Apple Kid doesn't have a social life and spends his time studying. He can make you the item you need to get around this pointed obstruction.

Apple Kid knows what erases pointed obstructions.

Crowded Cultists



Lost in a true blue cultist crowd? Seek out and talk to the fidgety followers.

EPIC STRATEGY

In Happy Happy Village there is a room filled with followers of Cult Leader Carpainter. In order to reach Carpainter, you need to push your way to the other side of a room filled with swaying blue cult members. Watch as the crowd moves back and forth. Some followers move much faster than others. Talk to these members to find your way through the room. If you can't identify the fidgety followers, don't worry—keep talking to everyone and you'll find your way through the room.

Waterfall Password

So you don't have the password for Belch's Base beneath the waterfall? Don't sweat it-when you receive the message, "Say the Password," don't touch any buttons on your controller for three minutes. The door opens by itself if you wait long enough. EarthBound features several puzzles that require patience. When all else fails, put the controller down and take a short break—you might be surprised by the result.

Fourside Dead End?

Are you stuck in Fourside with nowhere to go? This happens to more than a fair share of EarthBound players. Be sure to visit the Museum, Topolla Theater, and the Monotoli Building, then return to the desert. Did you find the Desert Gold Mines? The wide, dusty expanse of sagebrush and cacti hide many features. Explore the mines and return to Fourside after you dig up a Diamond.

Moonside Madness

Moonside is the exact reverse of Fourside. This can be confusing when you're questioned. Answering "Yes" means "No" and "No" means "Yes." Want a room for the night? Be sure to answer "No." This reverse response technique requires some time and practice. Travel in Moonside is also very different. Look for Warp Men if you want to travel from one area to another. Warp Men greet you by saying "Hello! And... Goodbye!" when you approach them. Each Warp Man sends you to a different location in Moonside.

Performance Payoff

Bailing out the Runaway Five is a tough business if you don't know where you stand with the theater manager. Depending on your location in the room, this crooked entrepreneur might take your message the wrong way. Talking across the table results in the normal managerial responses, even if you have the money to pay off the group's debt. Try talking in a different location. Walk behind the desk and stand next to the Theater Manager. If you have the money and are standing next to him, he'll understand. After all, money talks!

Let this crooked manager know where you stand on business matters.

FLEE, EARTHLINGS!

It's horrifying! It's horrific! It's horrible! It comes from Japan—home of Godzilla, Rodan, Mothra and rice. It's scary, too, with zombies and aliens and man-dicing kitchen implements! It's EarthBound from Nintendo, and it's coming to the Super NES this June. Be prepared to play!

EARTHBOUND™

Who will save planet Earth from the ravages of The Geek? Who will venture through space and time? Who else but you!

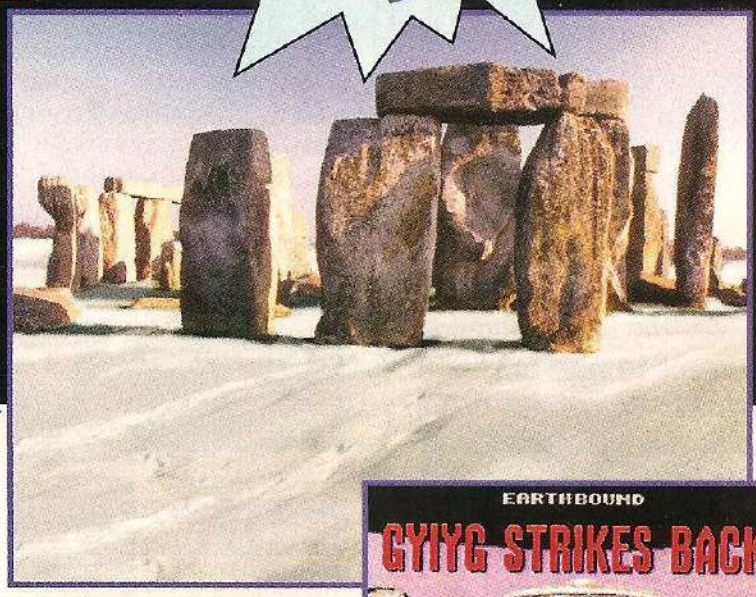
™ & © 1995 Nintendo

EPIC PREVIEW

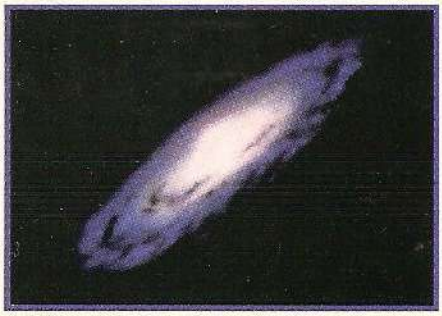
THE IRRATIONAL
INQUIRER

EXCLUSIVE PICS!

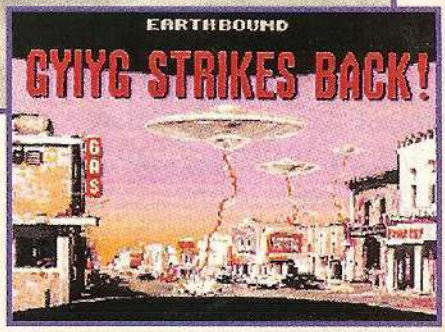
METEORITE HERALDS ALIEN INVASION!



EARTHBOUND STUNS THE CIVILIZED WORLD WITH SHOCKING PLAY VALUE AND FREE PIZZA DELIVERY



Although EarthBound appears to be a harmless RPG, featuring modern settings and a sci-fi theme, sources inside Nintendo report that, in fact, the game "zombifies" players. Nintendo spokespersons refused to comment, repeating only, "Must play! Must play!" Inquirer staff members have uncovered that the sprawling game covers huge areas and includes funky enemies such as an evil gasoline pump. Speculation suggests that the Game Pak's battery backed memory may actually control an alien signalling device. Our investigative reporters are on the scene.



NIGHT OF UFO TERROR PLAGUES ONETT

The people of the small American town of Onett passed a night of intergalactic terror recently when an object of extraterrestrial origin crashed in a pasture near the town. Police barricaded the site, but citizens reported seeing strange lights in the sky both before and after the incident. Was this just a meteorite or was it actually a downed UFO? Unnamed, unusual activities have since been reported in the area.

GEEK INVADES!!!
BOY, 13, ONLY HOPE

Sources at the UFO crash site in Onett have confirmed that the Earth now faces imminent destruction by a ruthless space alien known as the Geek. The plot was uncovered by a 13-year-old boy named Ness after he approached the highly radioactive crash site. Ness hopes to find several heroic companions willing to join with him to fight the interstellar threat. Armed with a broken baseball bat, an ATM card and a cookie, Ness stated, "I'll do my very best to save the planet. I promise."

NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN LIVE ALIENS...DINOSAURS...HEROIC HUMANS...BUGS...PIZZA DELIVERY GUYS...AND MORE!

FOUR COURAGEOUS KIDS FACE ULTIMATE TEST

TEEN HEROES DEFY GALACTIC FIEND

Ness, the heroic youth who hopes to save the Earth from an evil alien being said to be more powerful than anything in nature, has joined forces with three other kids—Jeff, Paula and Pu. Odds makers have put their chances of success at somewhere around one hundred billion to one.

NESS TO SAVE EARTH

Now that Ness has taken on the challenge of saving the Earth, people want to know what sort of qualifications the young man has. Reports from his hometown seem to indicate that he is resourceful and makes friends easily. He is also said to have limited Psychic (PSI) powers that can be used in battles or during dodgeball matches. Observers have also noticed a marked fondness for snacks.

PSYCHIC YOUTH

Clinical tests have revealed that Ness, the Onett youth charged with saving the planet from hideous destruction, has psychic abilities. His healing and fighting skills are currently crude, but doctors believe that they will strengthen with repeated use.

Ness' PSI abilities allow him to attack or heal, but he must first learn the skills. As he grows stronger, it is believed that he will master new and more powerful PSI skills.

NESS'S FAMILY

Although they hate to see him go, Ness's family will do all they can to assist his effort to save the planet.

Ness can rely on his sister, Tracy, to take care of spare items. His Dad records his progress and puts money in the ATM. If he doesn't call his Mom, his fighting ability suffers.

TELEPATHY LINKED TO TEEN HERO

Ness's newest companion, Paula, has been linked to the use of PSI powers including the use of telepathy. Telepathy is the ability to communicate over distances using only the mind. Following in the legendary footsteps of starcrossed lovers Link and Zelda, Paula supposedly called Ness telepathically when she was kidnapped recently. Paula refused comment on this.

MORE AMAZING POWERS

The Inquirer has overwhelming evidence that Paula repeatedly proved her ability to use Offense and Defense PSI powers in addition to communicating using telepathy. The evidence includes eyewitness accounts of PSI attacks, levitation and a trail of bent spoons.

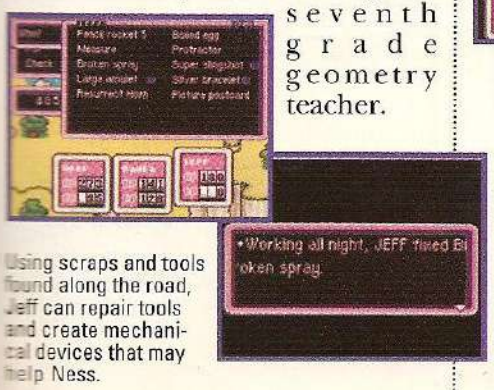
Paula can't use Recover, but she reportedly is strong in the use of Offense and Defense. In addition to these skills, she can speak long distance without a phone.

MECHANICAL GENIUS JOINS NESS'S TEAM

The latest reports on Ness and Paula indicate that they have been taken captive in the town of Threek. Unsubstantiated reports are coming in that the son of famed "sane" scientist, Dr. Andonut, has also come to Threek. How Jeff learned about the presence of Paula and Ness is a mystery since he doesn't subscribe to the Irrational Inquirer. Friends and family say that Jeff has dabbled in every field of engineering: from moped maintenance to nuclear fusion. He can fix anything or make tools from scrap. But the question remains—can this young Einstein save the planet?

Brain evolution leads to breakthrough in PSI power.

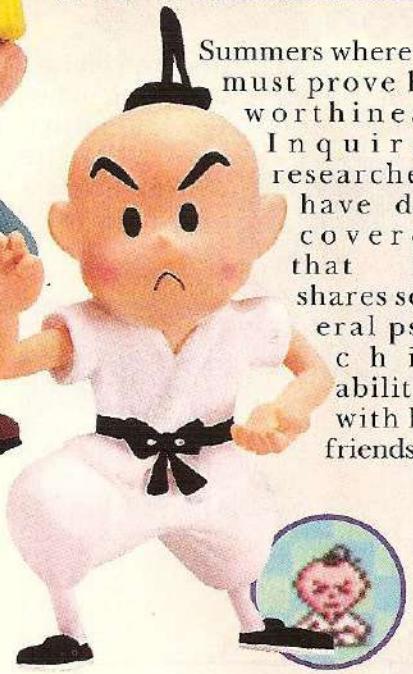
Jeff Andonut's medical reports prove that he doesn't have extraordinary powers like those of his companions. Experts suggest, however, that the young man's extraordinary grasp of mechanics may prove even more valuable for the hopes of the planet. "He was like a true-life McGyver," recalled Jeff's seventh grade geometry teacher.



Using scraps and tools found along the road, Jeff can repair tools and create mechanical devices that may help Ness.

A BOY NAMED PU

The fourth member of the wunderkids has been identified. Joining Ness, Paula and Jeff on their heroic quest is a young man known as Pu. His search for the others has taken him to the town of Summers where he must prove his worthiness. Inquirer researchers have discovered that Pu shares several psychic abilities with his friends.



PSI BOY

The newest of the global defenders, Pu, uses virtually every type of PSI force including Defense, Offense and Recover. Professional seers foretell that he is also destined to make use of a special weapon called the Sword of the King.

Pu may be the most useful of the Fated Four, but he is also the last to join the gang and he has the most catching up to do to build his experience and strength.

SAMARITANS HELP SAVE PLANET

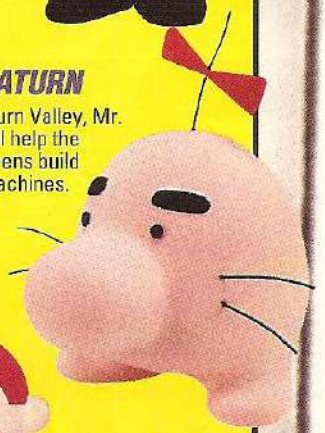
Everywhere the selfless young heroes turn they find citizens willing to help in the defense of Earth against the alien onslaught. People give them items or sometimes help in other ways.

DR. ANDONUTS

Jeff's father, the "sane" scientist, invents time machines, space ships and other hi-tech gadgets.

MR. SATURN

In the Saturn Valley, Mr. Saturn will help the Terrific Teens build special machines.

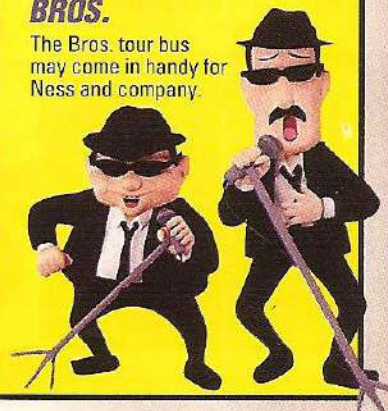


APPLE KID

This helpful citizen reportedly makes the best skeleton keys in the world.

THE RUNAWAY BROS.

The Bros. tour bus may come in handy for Ness and company.

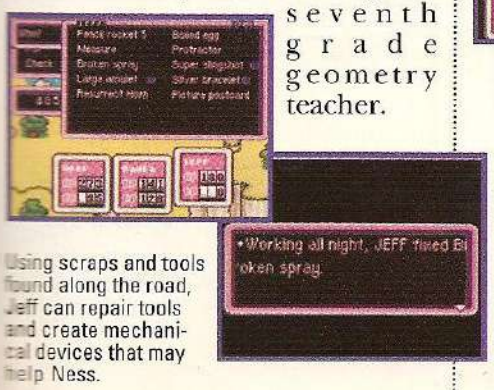


MECHANICAL GENIUS JOINS NESS'S TEAM

The latest reports on Ness and Paula indicate that they have been taken captive in the town of Threek. Unsubstantiated reports are coming in that the son of famed "sane" scientist, Dr. Andonut, has also come to Threek. How Jeff learned about the presence of Paula and Ness is a mystery since he doesn't subscribe to the Irrational Inquirer. Friends and family say that Jeff has dabbled in every field of engineering: from moped maintenance to nuclear fusion. He can fix anything or make tools from scrap. But the question remains—can this young Einstein save the planet?

Brain evolution leads to breakthrough in PSI power.

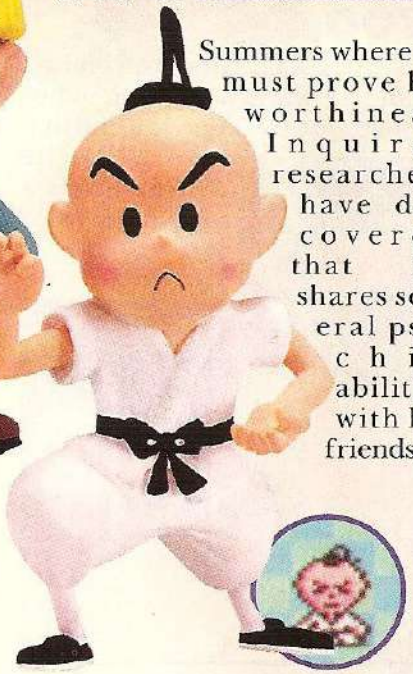
Jeff Andonut's medical reports prove that he doesn't have extraordinary powers like those of his companions. Experts suggest, however, that the young man's extraordinary grasp of mechanics may prove even more valuable for the hopes of the planet. "He was like a true-life McGyver," recalled Jeff's seventh grade geometry teacher.



Using scraps and tools found along the road, Jeff can repair tools and create mechanical devices that may help Ness.

A BOY NAMED PU

The fourth member of the wunderkids has been identified. Joining Ness, Paula and Jeff on their heroic quest is a young man known as Pu. His search for the others has taken him to the town of Summers where he must prove his worthiness. Inquirer researchers have discovered that Pu shares several psychic abilities with his friends.



PSI BOY

The newest of the global defenders, Pu, uses virtually every type of PSI force including Defense, Offense and Recover. Professional seers foretell that he is also destined to make use of a special weapon called the Sword of the King.

Pu may be the most useful of the Fated Four, but he is also the last to join the gang and he has the most catching up to do to build his experience and strength.

SAMARITANS HELP SAVE PLANET

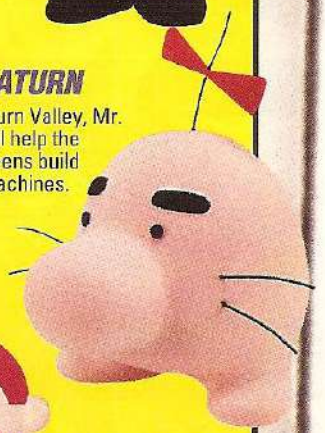
Everywhere the selfless young heroes turn they find citizens willing to help in the defense of Earth against the alien onslaught. People give them items or sometimes help in other ways.

DR. ANDONUTS

Jeff's father, the "sane" scientist, invents time machines, space ships and other hi-tech gadgets.

MR. SATURN

In the Saturn Valley, Mr. Saturn will help the Terrific Teens build special machines.

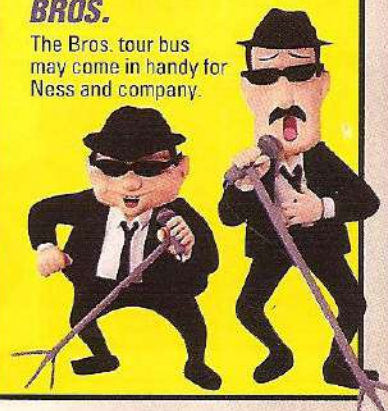


APPLE KID

This helpful citizen reportedly makes the best skeleton keys in the world.

THE RUNAWAY BROS.

The Bros. tour bus may come in handy for Ness and company.



"THE MOST EXCITING GAME IN THE UNIVERSE"

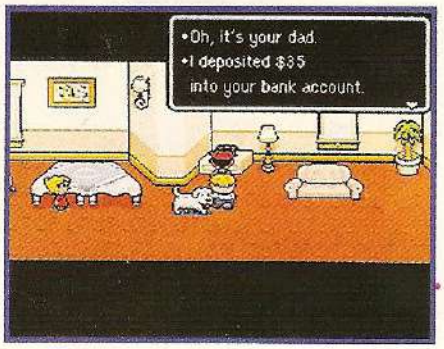
EARTHBOUND PLAYERS STUNNED BY REALISM AND OTHER GIMMICKS

In a move that's sure to offend millions of game players, Nintendo has thrown out the book on RPGs and replaced fantasy with reality and dozens of other cheap ploys and weird innovations.

JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY

CALL DAD FROM ANY PHONE FOR FAST CASH

What are parents good for? A survey of Onett youth answered that question with a resounding MONEY! Ness has an ATM card that lets him access his account from many convenient locations.



SISTER HELPS, TOO

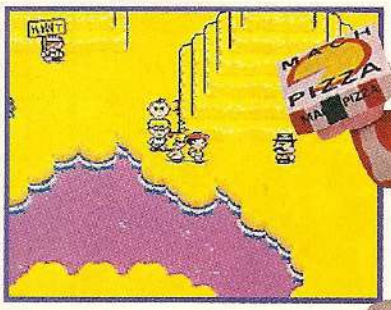
Ness' sister, Tracy, today promised to hold any item belonging to her brother until he requests it and that he will be charged only a nominal service fee.

BOOK YOUR RESERVATIONS

Ness and other world-saving heroes may be busy, but they'll have to call ahead for reservations just like a regular Joe if they want a fine dining experience at a restaurant in EarthBound.

PIZZA TO GO

In an historic agreement that may go down as the greatest day in fast food history, the world's pizza restaurants have pledged to help save the Earth. From today forward until the Geek is gone, they have agreed to deliver pizzas to Ness no matter where he is in time or space.



MOTHER'S LOVE

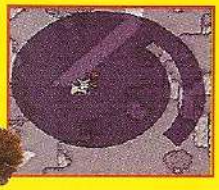
Eye witnesses to some of Ness' battles have reported a curious phenomenon. At times, Ness falls completely to pieces and seems to apologize for not calling home. "I think he just misses my cookies," says Ness' mom.

SNEAK ATTACK SYSTEM

The designers of EarthBound today revealed the remarkable combat system that allows players to sneak up on enemies to gain an advantage. Players should be warned that this technology allows game enemies to ambush them, as well. Of course good guys and bad guys may also meet head on.

FACE TO FACE

The standard RPG engagement is a Face-To-Face encounter. In EarthBound, you gain no advantage from this scenario. The gray background signals it's an even bout.

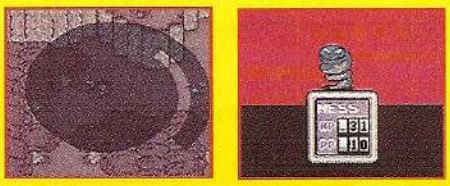


USEFUL STUFF

Ness and his companions must use whatever weapons and items they can lay their hands on to defeat their enemies and progress in the game.

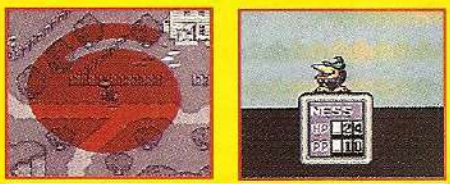
ENEMY ADVANTAGE

If you attack the enemy from the side or back, you'll gain an attack advantage over it. You'll have to be quick, because the enemies zero in on you. The green screen shows your cunning.



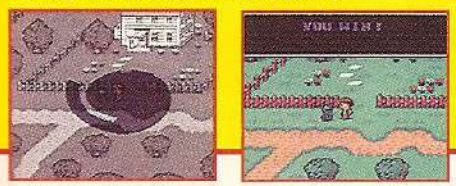
AMBUSHED

If an enemy attacks you when you're looking the wrong way, it will have the first advantage in the battle. The screen will flash red, signaling that you blew it.



NO CONTEST

If you are far more powerful (with higher levels) than an enemy that you meet along the road, you won't even have to fight it, but you'll still get experience points. Build your levels quickly!



WANTED: DEAD, STUFFED OR SCRAMBLED

Reports of aliens lurking in the countryside around Onett have terrified the public. Other inexplicable phenomena, such as pets running away and police officers behaving oddly, have also been reported. If you see any of these entities, call the Alien Invasion Hotline.

DINOSAURS
A lost, subterranean world is home to these giants.

SHARKS GANG
This gang of weird purple kids likes hula hoops and skateboards.

STAR MEN
These aliens are reported to possess great powers.

BLOBS
Witnesses report confrontations with puddles of hostile glop.

GAS PUMPS
Inanimate objects have seemingly come to life!

BIG MOUTHS
Experts are stumped by these giant mouths with no bodies.

U-PICK

Recent reports claim that EarthBound players can personalize the game with custom names. Players' choices for Food and Cool Thing add even more of a personal touch, especially when they go home to their favorite meals.